

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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P R 280725Z FEB 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0355
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JERUSALEM 0561

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON

U.S. DEL NO. 33

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, IS, EG, XF
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY FEBRUARY 27

1. I MET FOR BREAKFAST THIS MORNING WITH DAVID OWEN, AT HIS INITIATIVE, FOR A GENERAL REVIEW OF CURRENT STATUS OF THE MIDDLE EAST TALKS. LATER IN THE MORNING OWEN CALLED ON BEGIN.

2. OWEN BEGAN THE DISCUSSION BY REMARKING THAT DAYAN HAD RECENTLY SAID THE EGYPTIANS WERE TOUGHENING THEIR POSITION AND WOULD NOT ACCEPT PRESIDENT CARTER'S ASWAN LANGUAGE. I SAID THE PROBLEM ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES IS THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE TALKING ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA PARTICIPATING IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE. THE EGYPTIANS WANTS LANGUAGE THAT REFERS TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN GENERAL, NOT LIMITED TO

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INHABITANTS OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA; THE EGYPTIANS ALSO WANT TO USE THE TERM "LEGITIMATE RIGHTS" OF THE PALESTINIANS AND "IN ALL ITS ASPECTS," WHEREAS THE ISRAELIS DO NOT WANT TO REFER TO RIGHTS EXCEPT IN LIMITED SENSE. THE EGYPTIANS HAD BEEN THINKING OF FURTHER TOUGHENING THEIR DRAFT OF THE DECLARATION IN THIS ROUND, BUT DIDN'T INSIST

ON DOING SO. I SAID THAT IN THE END, I THOUGHT THE TWO SIDES WOULD HAVE TO AGREE ON THE ASWAN FORMULA. THE EGYPTIANS PROBABLY WOULD ACCEPT THE ASWAN LANGUAGE; FOR THE ISRAELIS, IT WOULD BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT. ASWAN IMPLIES THAT MORE WILL HAPPEN ON THE WEST BANK THAN IS INTENDED UNDER BEGIN'S SELF-RULE PLAN.

3. OWEN, WHO HAD JUST COME FROM TALKS IN AMMAN, SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WOULD BE ENOUGH TO BRING HUSSEIN INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS. I SAID IT HAS BEEN MY FEELING ALL ALONG THAT THE DECLARATION WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT FOR HUSSEIN. OWEN SAID HUSSEIN IS WORRIED THAT THE CURRENT EFFORT WILL FAIL; HE PREFERS THE GENEVA FRAMEWORK. OWEN NOTED THAT HUSSEIN SAYS HE NEEDS FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST BANK AND EAST JERUSALEM, BUT SINCE HE (OWEN) DID NOT SEE THIS IN THE CARDS, HE WONDERED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF HASSAN'S IDEA OF "RECIPROCITY" WITH STATUS OF ISRAELIS ON WEST BANK BALANCED BY RECIPROCAL STATUS FOR ARAB INHABITANTS OF GALILEE. OWEN SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THE IDEA WITH BOTH HUSSEIN AND HASSAN AND THEY HAD SHOWN INTEREST IN IT. HE HAD TRIED TO DISCUSS IT WITH DAYAN, BUT DAYAN HAD KNOCKED IT DOWN.

4. I SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO WORKING ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, WE ARE TRYING TO GET IDEAS FROM THE EGYPTIANS ON THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA SO THAT WE CAN BEGIN
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TO EXPLORE WITH THE ISRAELIS THE SUBJECT OF INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. THE ISRAELIS SAY THEY DO NOT WANT TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT UNTIL THERE ARE NEGOTIATIONS WITH HUSSEIN PARTICIPATING AND THE EGYPTIANS ARE HESITANT TO GET INTO IT BECAUSE THEY FEEL THEY HAVE NO MANDATE. DAYAN KEEPS ASKING US WHAT SADAT WILL DO WHEN A DECLARATION IS AGREED, AND WE KEEP TELLING HIM THAT SADAT PROBABLY DOESN'T KNOW IN HIS OWN MIND BUT EGYPTIANS CONTINUE TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF A DECLARATION THAT WILL BRING HUSSEIN IN. OWEN ASKED IF SADAT PLANS TO TALK WITH HUSSEIN AND I SAID NO, SADAT SEES NO USE IN PRESSING HUSSEIN. HE THINKS HUSSEIN WILL COME OF HIS OWN ACCORD ONCE HE SEES THINGS ARE MOVING.

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 JERUSALEM 0561

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

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5. OWEN ASKED IF THERE WERE NEGOTIATIONS GOING ON CURRENTLY BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL ON SINAI SETTLEMENTS PROBLEM. I SAID NOT THAT I KNEW. I NOTED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER TO RESOLVE THIS IF IT HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN SO MUCH PUBLICITY. I SAID THAT LOGICALLY SUCH A SMALL AREA AS THAT OCCUPIED BY THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS SHOULDN'T MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE, BUT SADAT INSISTS ON ISRAEL'S EVACUATING EVERY INCH OF EGYPTIAN TERRITORY. OWEN ASKED IF SADAT WOULD AGREE TO AN EXCHANGE OF TERRITORY IN SINAI AND THE NEGEV. I SAID THAT SEEMS TO BE TOTALLY RULED OUT. OWEN SAID HE THOUGHT THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS ISSUE MIGHT BECOME MORE UNMANAGEABLE THAT TERRITORIAL EXCHANGE MIGHT BE THE ONLY SOLUTION. OWEN REMARKED THAT AFTER ALL THE ISRAELIS HAD WON A WAR AND IT IS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THEM TO GIVE UP ALL THE TERRITORY THEY TOOK. I SAID ONE VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM WE HAVE RUN INTO IS THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE NOW SAYING
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THAT THE WITHDRAWAL PROVISION OF 242 DOES NOT APPLY TO ALL FRONTS; THEY SAY IT CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL BUT NOT ON ALL FRONTS. I NOTED THAT THIS CREATES A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION AND WILL MAKE IT MUCH HARDER FOR US TO GET AGREEMENT ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

6. OWEN SAID A NEW CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK IS NEEDED. THE ONLY IDEA HE COULD OFFER WAS THE CONCEPT OF RECIPROCAL TERRITORIAL EXCHANGES FOR SINAI AND HASSAN'S RECIPROCITY IDEA

FOR GALILEE AND THE WEST BANK. OWEN
SAID DAYAN HAD RAISED WITH HIM THE POSSIBILITY OF
ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN NATO IN THE CONTEXT OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT.
OWEN DID "NOT THINK IT INCONCEIVABLE" THAT EGYPT, ISRAEL AND
JORDAN COULD BE OFFERED MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. HAD THAT EVER
COME UP? I SAID NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE, AND THAT IT WOULD BE QUITE A
CONCEPTUAL LEAP. OWEN SAID HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE IDEA HAS
GREAT PROBLEMS, BUT MANY FRINGE POWERS ARE MEMBERS OF NATO.
MOREOVER, IF NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ONLY IN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE OLD CONCEPTS OF RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338, "YOU WILL
NEVER SOLVE THE PROBLEM." I SAID I DID NOT THINK THE PROBLEM
WOULD BE SOLVED EITHER BY ABANDONING 242 AND 338. I SAID
I THOUGHT THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR THE WEST BANK WOULD BE AN INTERIM
ARRANGEMENT, WHICH WOULD GIVE TIME FOR CREATION OF A NEW LEADERSHIP
THERE AND GIVE ISRAEL SECURITY ASSURANCES. I SAID I
THOUGHT SADAT WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE IDEA OF ISRAELI
SECURITY POINTS ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA IN THE FRAMEWORK OF AN
INTERIM ARRANGEMENT. OWEN SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO RAISE WITH THE
ISRAELIS THE NEED TO MAKE THE BEGIN PLAN A GENUINELY INTERIM
OR TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT AND GIVING ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS
SAME STATUS AS ARAB
RESIDENTS RATHER THAN THEIR BEING "ISLANDS OF ISRAEL."
I SAID I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DO SO, PROVIDED OF COURSE
THAT NO REFERENCE WAS MADE TO THE U.S.

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7. OWEN NONETHELESS SAID HE FEARED THIS "HALFWAY HOUSE" (AN
INTERIM ARRANGEMENT FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA) WOULD NOT WORK.
HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER TO GO STRAIGHT TO THE IDEA OF
A JORDANIAN-ISRAEL FEDERATION.
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